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FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS, REHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE--RHETORIC CURRICULUM II, STUDENT VERSION.

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PRESENTED HERE WERE STUDY GUIDES FOR STUDENT USE IN A SEVENTH-GRADE RHETORIC CURRICULUM. THE GUIDE PRESENTED BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND EXERCISES RELATED TO--(1) FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS, AND (2) RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE. AN ACCOMPANYING GUIDE WAS PREPARED FOR TEACHER USE (ED 010 134). (WN)

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OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS

RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE

Rhetoric Curriculum II
Student Version

ED010237

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OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

FINDING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS

Rhetoric Curriculum II

Student Version

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Student Version

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LESSON ONE - PURPOSE COMES FIRST

Everything we see, we see arranged in some kind of pattern in space, and, before we stop to think about it, at least, that seems to be a simple enough matter. And if we want to tell someone else about the arrangement of a bedroom, the veins in a leaf, a marching band, a football offensive formation, a mountain range, the United States Senate Chamber, or anything else, the easiest thing to do is to take a picture and explain how they are related to each other.

The job gets considerably more difficult when we have to explain an arrangement by telling about it or writing about it without the help of a picture. Everything that we explained with the picture or by pointing has to be explained now with words. Finding the words to do this job is not easy; it requires first that we understand all of the parts of the arrangement and understand how the parts are related to each other; then we have to use words to describe the objects and explain the connections among them. But it is important to be able to do this; often, when we are writing, the reader will miss our point unless he understands the arrangement of the things we are talking about.

In this lesson we will tackle the problem of using words to picture an arrangement or a scene.

I

Here is a description of a stage as it is set for a play in which a king, his queen, and members of their court are the chief actors. As you read the paragraph, think about how the scene is arranged.

> As the stage curtains part, the audience can see that the scene is one of royal splendor. A huge scarlet and gold tapestry emblazoned with rampant lions hangs from the ceiling at center back. In front of this hanging is a carved and gilded double throne mounted on a raised platform which is richly carpeted. To the right and left of the throne stand two immobile figures in red and gold livery, obviously waiting for something. At the left front are two high-backed gilded chairs upholstered in scarlet, and at the right front is a low settee, fitted out with gold cushions. An arched window on the left wall allows long shafts of mellow sunlight to fall across the chartreuse carpet which extends from the throne to the double

arched doors on the right. Through the doors can be seen two pages dressed in red and gold doublet and hose. Holding long golden trumpets to their lips, they are ready to lead a royal procession into the throne room. The trumpets sound and the action begins.

1. What words and phrases in the paragraph help you to understand what the objects on the stage look like and what they are made of?

2. What words and phrases in the paragraph help you to understand how the objects are arranged on the stage?

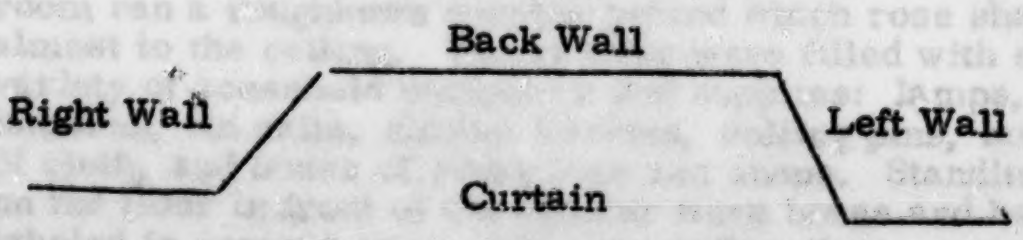
3. Why is the stage arranged as it is?

4. What was the writer's purpose in describing the scene?

5. What would one expect to find on a stage that the writer didn't mention? Why didn't he mention these things?

6. The writer doesn't describe the objects on the stage in great detail. Why doesn't he?

7. Lay out a stage plan of the throne room. Enlarge the following diagram on your own paper, and locate all of the stage properties and actors mentioned in the paragraph. (Note: "Right" and "left" on a stage are as the <u>actor</u> facing the audience would see them.)



II

When we arrange things, we arrange them with a purpose in mind; what we are going to do with things determines where we put them. The stage setting we just read about, for instance, was arranged to suit the action of the play. Because the thrones are at the center of the stage, we know that the king and queen who are about to enter will be at the center of the action that will follow. We arrange chessmen in order to play chess, and croquet wickets in order to play croquet; the furniture in your classroom was arranged to suit the purpose of conducting a class. (You might stop to think for a minute about why the various things in your classroom are placed where they are.)

However, when we <u>describe</u> an arrangement our purposes are going to be somewhat different from the purposes we have in mind when we <u>make</u> an arrangement. The purpose of <u>describing</u> the stage setting was to enable someone to set up the stage for the play, but the purpose of <u>setting up</u> the stage is to have it ready for the action of the play. So,

whenever we describe something we have to understand both our purpose in giving the description and the purpose of the arrangement we are describing. What we choose to include in our description, how much detail we use, and how we describe the relationships among the parts of the arrangement will depend on what the purpose of the arrangement is, and what <u>our</u> purpose is in making the arrangement.

The following paragraphs were not written to enable someone to set the stage for a play; instead, they were written as a part of a larger narrative of the writer's childhood. Read the selection carefully and answer the questions that follow it.

> I loved my grandfather's country store. It was the mecca of my childhood to which I went with my family on annual summer pilgrimages. I can see it yet, basking in the Columbia River sunshine in a little hollow where the plateau dropped down in easy folds toward the river. There a meandering creek brought moisture to the little clump of cottonwood trees which served as summer shade for the store and the post office next door.
>
> Inside, it was always cool and dim, the two windows in the thick walls being well-shuttered to keep out the glare of any sun which might find its way through the shade trees. Coming into the store at midday in July was like coming into a cool cavern, an Aladdin's cave filled with all manner of treasure. Across the entire room ran a roughhewn counter behind which rose shelves almost to the ceiling. The shelves were filled with every variety of household equipment and supplies: lamps, lanterns, tin pails, clothes baskets, rolling pins, bolts of cloth, and boxes of every size and shape. Standing on the floor in front of the counter were boxes and barrels labeled in various ways. On the counter there was always a box containing licorice whips, and beside it was a glass jar filled with strong white peppermints. Hams and bacons hung from the ceiling in one dim corner, and across the room, within easy reach of the counter, hung a big bunch of bananas. A few kegs of nails were lined up against one wall with a scattering of farm tools fastened on a rack above them. On the wall behind the counter, a door led to the supply room, which was set into the hillside, a storage area cool and delightful in summer and safe from frost in winter.

1. Somebody built this store and arranged everything that is in it. What purposes did he have in mind when he arranged things as he did?

2. Was the purpose of the writer to tell us how to arrange the inside of a country store? Why did the writer describe the store?

3. How might the description be different if the purpose of the writer were to tell us how to arrange the inside of a country store?

4. Why did this writer use more details than the writer who described the stage setting did?

5. Do you find clues that tell you whether the store is being described from the point of view of a small child or from the point of view of an adult? If you were to describe the store strictly from the point of view of a child, what changes would you make? Would your description emphasize different things? Would you describe things differently?

WRITING EXERCISE

Assume the country store you read about is the setting for a play. Describe the scene so a stage manager can set up the stage in preparation for the action of the play. Before you begin you must decide what the action will be. Choose any action you wish--a holdup, the arrival of two trappers who wish to furnish a cabin for the winter, the arrival of a child who has ten cents to spend, or any other action that might take place in a country store.

When you have finished your description be prepared to tell the class what action is going to take place and why you described the setting as you did.

ASSIGNMENT FOR SPEAKING

Choose a setting from a story, play, or novel your class has read this year. You are going to give a short talk in which you tell the other members of your class how to set up a stage for the scene you chose.

After you have chosen a setting to describe, make a rough sketch of it. Remember that one long side of the rectangle representing the floor of the stage is open to the audience. Plan your setting as the audience would see it, placing all buildings, furnishings, windows, entrances--whatever you need--clearly in the right place.

Carefully reread the section of the story, play, or novel that is relevant to your setting and make notes which will help you describe it. (If you have a chair on the stage, does it make any difference to the action what kind of chair it is? If so, be sure you tell what kind of chair it is. If there is a house in your setting, does it make any difference what color the house is? If so, tell what color it is. If there are flowers in the scene, does it make any difference what kind of flowers they are? Etc.)

Using your sketch and your detailed notes, plan a short talk to the class. Remember that they must set up the stage using only your description; and everything that will be needed for the action must be in the right place on the stage when the action begins.

If your setting is not too elaborate you may sketch it on the board before you begin your talk. However, you may wish to prepare a drawing at home on a large sheet of paper or cardboard and bring it to class. Remember that whether it is on the board or on paper, the sketch must be large enough to be seen by all members of the class.

Plan carefully and practice at home.

1. Begin with a general statement about the setting and the action that will take place.

2. Plan out the order in which you will mention the properties on the stage.

3. Practice your talk at home, using your sketch to help you point out the locations of items in your stage plan. (If you can find a good listener who knows something about your subject, see if you can make him understand the arrangement of the setting and how it fits the action.)

4. Be sure you have included everything that will be needed in the action that is to follow. Have a reason for including everything you include.

5. Check with a dictionary to be sure you can pronounce correctly all the words you want to use.

After you have given your talk, the other students will check to see whether you have included everything that is needed for the action and whether your description was clear enough that they could have set up the stage.

III

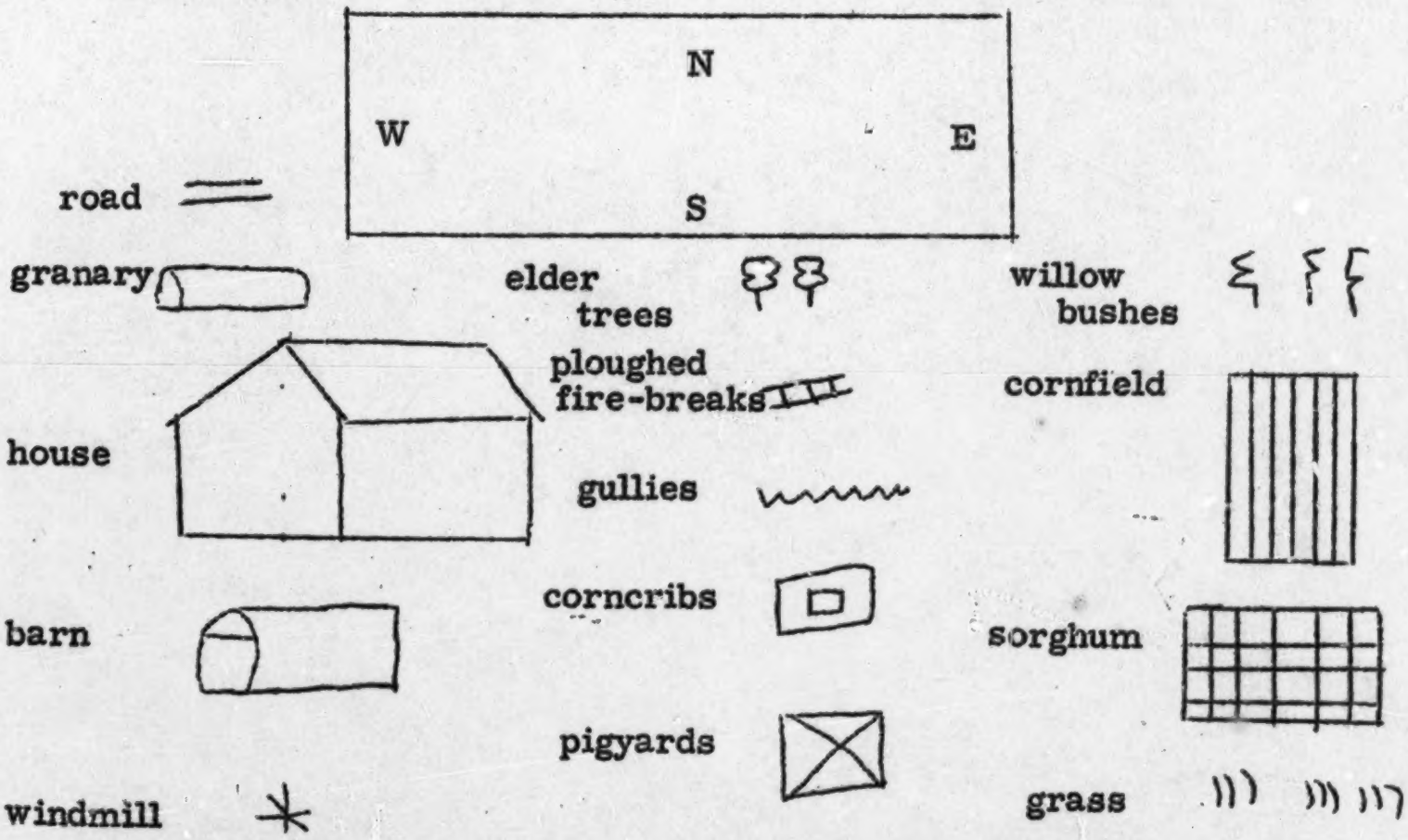
Imagine that you are a movie director. You are going to film the novel My Antonia by Willa Cather, from which the passage below is taken. You have decided to have your movie begin with a scene early in the novel in which ten-year-old Jim Burden first visits his grandmother's garden. The time is in the late 1800's. First read Miss Cather's description of the setting and of the action that take place in the setting.

(See passage from My Antonia by Willa Cather, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, 1954, beginning "Early next morning" on page 13 and ending "I was entirely happy" on page 18.)

Since you wish to begin your movie with a distant shot of the prairie and the farm, make a rough sketch of the scene so your helpers can find

a suitable location and have the necessary structures built.

On a sheet of notebook paper write N, E, S, and W as the diagram below indicates. Using the symbols given below the diagram, locate the items listed.



The first two paragraphs in the passage from My Antonia will give you all the clues you need. If you have difficulty in seeing how the items are located on the farm, perhaps these suggestions will help you.

1. For every item you are to locate on the map, there is a phrase which provides a clue. However, not all the clues point to an exact location. Sometimes you will have to use your own judgment.

2. Locate the house and the windmill first, then the barns, granaries, and pigyards.

3. Where does the land slope down to a draw and then rise again?

4. Draw the road last. Although the route of the road cannot be mapped exactly, there are several clues to help you, and the rest of it you will have to put in what seems to be the most likely location.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

After the opening long shot of the whole farm, you are ready to begin the action of the movie. You are going to write a paper in which you describe how the trip to the garden should be filmed.

The most important thing to remember is that the audience will see what the camera sees. You are in control of the camera, so it is up to you to decide what the audience will see. Assume that you can move the camera around on a truck or even put it in a helicopter. You can move it in for a closeup or you can move it back for a panoramic view. Also you must decide from what angle you want the audience to see things: should they see a character from the front or from the side? Should the camera look up at the house or down on it? When the characters move, the camera should follow them, but how close should it be? So close that we can see only the heads and shoulders of the characters, or far enough away that we can see the landscape and tell where they are going?

Even more difficult is to show the scene in such a way that the audience will understand the boy's feelings about the farm and the land, that they will feel as he does. What the camera sees and how it sees are important to creating the impressions Jim had; important too are colors and details, and you must think about how you can use colors and details to create for the audience the impressions Jim had of the farm and the land.

Read through the scene again, and make notes about how you will film it. Pay particular attention to Jim's impressions. In a few sentences explain what you think Jim's feelings were and what he saw that caused his feelings. Make notes too about how you might create feelings like Jim's in the minds of the audience.

Now, write a set of instructions for the cameraman. First explain to him in general terms the effect you want; then tell him how to handle the camera in order to get the effect you want.

LESSON TWO - EXPRESSING THOSE FEELINGS

I

Ordinarily, we see what we see, and that is about all there is to it. But sometimes the things we see and touch and hear strike our feelings, and they seem important to us. It is difficult to put our feelings into words, but we sometimes want to put them into words because we would like other people to understand the way we feel. We search around for words that will tell them what it was we noticed and what effect it had on us. We say things like "What a beautiful morning!" or "Isn't that great!" or "Man, it's quiet this morning!" When we see that the person we are talking to isn't impressed, we try again: "Isn't this morning the greatest?" And, if we still get no response, we are likely to give up and say something like "Well, I think it's pretty nice, even if you don't." We realize that somehow we didn't succeed in getting across what we felt, but we don't know what went wrong.

If, on the other hand, the other person says "Yeah, that's really beautiful," we still don't feel very satisfied. We don't really know if he felt the same way we did, or even if he was noticing the same things we noticed.

When we are talking we usually let it go at that. It doesn't seem worth the effort to try to make the other person understand our feelings; besides, there are other things to do, and for some reason talking about beautiful things is usually embarrassing. But when we are writing there is time to try again, to try to figure out what went wrong, and to find a way of saying things differently so that someone else can understand our feelings and reactions.

In this lesson we are going to try to discover what does go wrong, and to discover how we can say things differently so that we can be satisfied that other people do understand how we feel.

One place to start is with the words we emphasized in those sentences --words like morning, quiet, beautiful, and great. We expect these words to tell somebody else how we feel--that's why we emphasized them--but for some reason they don't do a very good job of it. In order to understand why they don't, let's look at them from the point of view of the person who is hearing them. When someone says to us "A great thing happened to me the other day," we expect to hear more about the "thing" that happened to him. If we ask someone, "How was the

game?" and we get the answer, "It was exciting," we immediately say, "Well, tell me about it." Words like thing, game, morning, exciting, and beautiful arouse our curiosity, but if nothing follows them, they leave us dissatisfied. And other people feel the same way when we say things like "What a beautiful morning!" What we must do, then, is not stop there; we must go on and tell more. But how do we go on? What should we say?

In a few minutes we will look at how a professional writer starts with such words and then goes on, but before we do we will look at these words a little more closely.

EXERCISE I

1. Begin with the list of words we have mentioned: beautiful, great, quiet, morning, thing, game, and exciting. Now divide these words into two groups. In one group put the words that name something. In the other group put the words that are used to describe things we can name. (Can you put the word quiet in both groups?)

2. With the help of your teacher and the other members of your class add words to both of these groups. In the first group put words that name things you know about and which other people might like to know about. In the second group put words that might describe the things you have named.

3. Using the sentence patterns
"The morning was _____."
"The game was _____,"
make a list of words which could be put in the blanks. Do all of the words on your list describe or tell something about what was named in the sentence? Can you think of words that describe but that could not be put in the blanks in these particular sentences? Why couldn't they? Could some words be used in one of these sentences but not in the other? Why not?

4. When we use a word like exciting or beautiful it describes the thing we are talking about. Does it also tell something about the feelings we have for the thing we named?

5. With the help of your teacher and the other students in your class, make a list of words like exciting and beautiful which do two jobs at once: that is, that describe the thing we are talking about, and also describe our feelings for the thing.

6. Ordinarily words like big or red or square are used only to describe the thing we are talking about, and they reveal little or nothing about how we feel. But can you use these three words in a sentence so that they not only describe the thing that is named in the sentence but also reveal how you feel about the thing?

7. Keep a notebook in which you write down sentences of the pattern: "The game was exciting." These sentences should name things you

really care about, are interested in, and know about from personal experience. Later you are going to use some of these sentences as starting points for papers, and unless you have named things you do care about, you won't be interested in writing about them.

The words that fit into the "exciting" place in these sentences need to be words that show your feelings about the thing you named.

II

Now we will look at what a professional writer does with sentences like the ones you are putting in your notebook.

In Life on the Mississippi Mark Twain describes his life as a a river-boat pilot on the Mississippi river. Although he did not work the early morning watch and did not have to get up early, he says,

> I had myself called with the four-o'clock watch, mornings, for one cannot see too many summer sunrises on the Mississippi. They are enchanting.

In these two sentences Twain has aroused our curiosity. He says that even though he didn't have to go to work, he got up at four o'clock of his own free will--it takes something unusual to get most people out of bed at four o'clock in the morning.

Then he tells us why he got up: to see the summer morning. In a way he has satisfied our curiosity, but we still have questions. "Why is a summer morning so important?" "What is there about a summer morning that would get him out of bed at four o'clock?" The word morning raises more questions in our minds than it answers; Twain has only told us what he wants us to be curious about.

Then Twain tells us that summer mornings on the Mississippi are "enchanting." This word describes the morning, but it also tells us how Twain feels and reacts when he sees a summer morning on the Mississippi --it enchants him. In a way, this answers our questions: he gets up at four o'clock in the morning because the summer mornings enchant him. But it raises still more questions: "What is it about summer mornings that enchants him?" "How does he feel when he is enchanted?" Twain hasn't gone much farther than we go when we say, "Isn't it a beautiful morning?" We are dissatisfied with his words morning and enchanting just as the people we talk to are dissatisfied with morning and beautiful.

If Mark Twain had never learned any more about writing than that, no one would read him, and he would have been forgotten a long time ago.

But Mark Twain did not stop there. He went on to satisfy the curiosity he had aroused. In the following sentences he says,

> First, there is the eloquence of silence; for a deep hush broods everywhere. Next, there is the haunting sense of loneliness, isolation, remoteness from the worry and bustle of the world.

He has picked out one quality of the morning to tell us about: the quietness, the silence. In answer to our question, "What is it about the morning that enchants you?" he has answered, "It is the quietness." In a way, this does answer our question, but we are still dissatisfied. We say to him, "OK, it is the silence, but what is so special about this silence? It hardly seems worthwhile to get up at four o'clock in the morning just to hear silence. You could have heard that in bed. And when you add 'a deep hush broods everywhere' I get a little more of an inkling of what you are getting at, but it doesn't really help much."

The words <u>silence</u> and <u>hush</u> are similar to <u>enchanting</u>; they raise more questions than they answer.

In the next sentence Twain turns away from describing the morning and describes his own feelings, the feelings that the morning arouses in him. They are, he says, feelings of loneliness and isolation. This is much less vague than "enchanting"; our imaginations are able to form a much clearer picture than before of how Twain felt. We think of times when we have been lonely and have felt remote from the world, and we imagine that the feelings Twain is trying to describe are similar to the feelings we have had. But we still have a question: "I have never been a river-boat pilot, and I have never seen the Mississippi river at four o'clock in the morning from the deck of a river boat, so the feelings of loneliness and remoteness I have had must be different from the feelings Twain had--but how are they different? He has promised to tell me what it is like to be on a river boat at four o'clock in the morning, and he has given me a vague hint of what it is like, but is that all I am going to get?"

Twain, of course, didn't stop there either. He went on to fulfill his promise. Let us look at how he did it.

> The dawn creeps in stealthily; the solid walls of black forest soften to gray, and vast stretches of the river open up and reveal themselves; the water is glass-smooth, gives off spectral little wreaths of white mist, there is not the faintest breath of wind, nor stir of leaf; the tranquility is profound and infinitely satisfying. Then a bird pipes up, another follows, and soon the pipings develop into a jubilant riot of music. You see none of the birds; you simply move through an atmosphere of song which seems to sing itself. When the light has come up a little stronger, you have one of the fairest and softest pictures imaginable. You have the intense green of the massed and crowded foliage near by; you see it paling shade by shade in front of you; upon the next projecting cape, a mile off or more, the tint has lightened to the tender young green of spring; the cape beyond that one has almost lost color, and the furthest one, miles away under the horizon, sleeps upon the water a mere dim vapor, and

hardly separable from the sky above it and about it. And all this stretch of river is a mirror, and you have the shadowy reflections of the leafage and the curving shores and the receding capes pictured in it. Well, that is all beautiful; soft and rich and beautiful; and when the sun gets well up, and distributes a pink flush here and a powder of gold yonder and a purple haze where it will yield the best effect, you grant that you have seen something that is worth remembering.

What did Mark Twain do to fulfill his promise? In one word, he gave us details. Not only details of his feelings but especially details of those things he saw and heard that caused or aroused his feelings. He let his mind drift back, and, in his imagination, he looked over the scene in detail, and then he told us about all of those details that had given him a feeling of enchantment.

After we have read those details, after Twain has filled out the picture he saw when he stood on the deck of the river boat--then we are ready to grant that he had seen something that is worth remembering. Then, we understand what he meant when he said that mornings on the Mississippi are enchanting. It is the details that have made the difference. But it was mostly the details of what Twain saw and heard that helped us to understand the way he felt--not only the details of his feelings.

If we want someone else to understand how we feel about something, we must tell them the details of what it was that made us feel the way we do.

EXERCISE II

1. Return to your notebook of sentences. Choose one or two of those sentences. Be sure you choose sentences which describe something you really care about. If the sentences in your notebook describe things you don't really care about, stop and think of some others; because if you write about something you don't care about, you can't expect anyone else to care either. Now, put each sentence at the top of a page in your notebook and begin adding details. Concentrate, let your mind drift back. Go over the scene or the incident bit by bit; use your eyes and your ears and your fingers. Record everything that helped to give you the feeling that you got. Remember the arrangement of the scene, and remember what you have learned about describing arrangements. Decide on the order in which you will describe things.

2. Keep your notebook handy; whenever you think of a new sentence, write it down; and when you think of new details, write them down. Later your teacher will ask you to write several papers based on your notes, and the more notes you have, the easier it will be to write papers that succeed in telling how you felt.

3. Check over your list of details to find out if all of them really helped to cause the feelings you had. Twain, for instance, could have described the crew in the galley, joking and laughing while eating breakfast. Why didn't he?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

We have discovered that sentences like "My boyfriend is an interesting person," "Family picnics are a big bore," and "My first day in junior high was frightening," are places to start, not places to stop. If we want someone else to understand what we mean by "interesting," "a big bore," and "frightening," we have to fill out the details of what it was that gave us that feeling.

Turn to your notebook. Pick out the sentence and set of details that interest you the most and write a paper that will make someone else understand how you felt. Be sure to include all the details you can think of that helped to make you feel the way you did. Eliminate the details that did not contribute to your feeling. Be sure you make the arrangement of the details clear.

Whenever you use a word like <u>picnic</u>, <u>day</u>, <u>boring</u>, <u>frightening</u>, <u>quiet</u>, or <u>noisy</u>, think of questions the reader might ask about them. Put yourself in his position and ask the questions he might ask.

After he has read the paper, you want the reader to grant "That <u>was</u> a big bore" or "That <u>was</u> frightening."

(See paragraph beginning "At first, birth strikes one . . ." and ending " . . . but extraordinarily moving." in selection entitled "A Shepherd's Life" from <u>One Man's Meat</u> by E. B. White, published by Harper & Row, 1960, page 136.)

EXERCISE I

1. With the help of a dictionary try to discover what White means by the following words and phrases: <u>ill-advised</u>, <u>functional process</u>, <u>herbaceous</u>, <u>trenchings</u>, <u>by-products</u>, <u>reserve</u>, <u>phenomenon</u>, <u>lustrous</u>, <u>corrugation</u>. Discuss these words with your teacher and the other students in your class. If you still feel you do not understand them very well, do not be discouraged, we will come back to them later.

2. With the help of a dictionary try to discover what White means by the word <u>vicarious</u> in the last sentence.

3. You can find another sentence in this paragraph in which White tells us what he means by <u>vicarious</u>. Which helps you more to understand what White means by the word, the dictionary definition or White's own explanation? Discuss your answer with the class.

EXERCISE II

1. White begins by saying "At first . . .," and two sentences later he says, "But after. . . ." Read these sentences again and discuss with the other students in your class what you expect White to say next. Has he aroused your curiosity about his feelings? What questions would you like to ask him?

LESSON THREE - SECOND THOUGHTS

Read the following paragraph by E. B. White in which he tells about the birth of lambs on his farm. White was a city-man who knew nothing about farming until he bought a farm, so the birth of a lamb was a new experience to him.

You will not find the paragraph easy to read. The first time through you will probably only get a vague idea of what White is talking about. But don't be discouraged; often things that are interesting are hard to read, and we have to read them several times before we understand them. Read the paragraph a second and third time, thinking about it as you read. Each reading should give you a clearer idea of what White is saying, but don't expect to understand the paragraph very well until you have discussed it with your teacher and the other students in your class.

(See paragraph beginning "At first, birth strikes one . . ." and ending " . . . but extraordinarily moving." in selection entitled "A Shepherd's Life" from <u>One Man's Meat</u> by E. B. White, published by Harper & Row, 1940, page 156.)

EXERCISE I

1. With the help of a dictionary try to discover what White means by the following words and phrases: <u>ill-advised</u>, <u>functional process</u>, <u>haphazard</u>, <u>trappings</u>, <u>by-products</u>, <u>reserve</u>, <u>phenomenon</u>, <u>lustrous</u>, <u>occupation</u>. Discuss these words with your teacher and the other students in your class. If you still feel you do not understand them very well, do not be discouraged, we will come back to them later.

2. With the help of a dictionary try to discover what White means by the word <u>vicarious</u> in the last sentence.

3. You can find another sentence in this paragraph in which White tells us what he means by <u>vicarious</u>. Which helps you more to understand what White means by the word, the dictionary definition or White's own explanation? Discuss your answer with the class.

EXERCISE II

1. White begins by saying "At first . . .," and two sentences later he says, "But after. . . ." Read these sentences again and discuss with the other students in your class what you expect White to say next. Has he aroused your curiosity about his feelings? What questions would you like to ask him?

2. The last word in this paragraph is moving. Here is another word like exciting, boring, and frightening. White has already given us some details to explain what feelings this word describes; if he were to follow the method Mark Twain used to explain such words, what would come next?

3. Now read the first paragraph again, and then read what White actually did write after the word moving.

(See selection entitled "A Shepherd's Life" from One Man's Meat by E. B. White, published by Harper & Row, 1940, beginning with "At first, birth strikes one . . ." on page 156 and ending with ". . . and your heart leaps up." on page 158.)

EXERCISE III

1. After the word moving, does White begin immediately to list details of the birth of a lamb? What does he do in the first three sentences of the second paragraph, and how do these three sentences prepare us for what is to follow? Do they give us a clearer idea of what to expect than we had before?

2. In the first sentence of the second paragraph White uses the word instinctive. Does he let the word lie there, or does he go on to give details that help to explain what he means by instinctive?

3. After reading all the way through the passage, write a short paragraph in which you explain what you think White means by the word instinctive. Compare what you have written with what other students in the class have written, and discuss any differences you find.

4. If there are other words in this passage you do not understand, ask your teacher about them.

5. Write a sentence in which you describe White's first reaction to birth.

6. Write a sentence in which you describe the feelings White had about birth after he had been involved in the birth of lambs.

7. Compare the words you chose with words other students chose. Do some of these words do a better job of describing White's feelings than others?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

After he had helped many ewes to deliver their lambs, White decided that birth is not "the supreme example of bad planning." Instead, he learned to have quite different feelings about birth. All of us have had similar experiences. We think we know how we will feel about something even before we become involved in it. But after we live through the experience, we find that it isn't what we had expected, and we have different feelings about it than we thought we would have.

Write a paper about an experience that changed your feelings about something. Tell first what feelings you expected to have, and then tell what your feelings were after you actually became involved.

Remember, it was the details of the experience that changed your feelings, and if you expect the reader to understand why our feelings changed, you must give him the same details of the experience that affected you.

You may have an experience recorded in your notebook that will fit this pattern. If not, use the same method you used for the last paper:

concentrate, think back, and note down details. Are you going to present a scene to the reader? If so, how should you arrange the scene?

You can, if you wish, build the paper around two sentences: "At first (or "Before) I felt that _____ was _____," and "After (or "Later) I felt that _____ was _____." Into the first blank in each sentence will go the name for the experience you are writing about. Into the second blank will go a word that describes your feelings.

After you have finished writing the paper look back at the words you put in the blanks. Are you still satisfied with these words, or can you now think of words that do a better job of naming the experience and of describing your feelings? Discuss this question with your teacher and the other students.

LESSON FOUR - MIXED FEELINGS

I

Read the following selection from Alan Moorehead's essay "The Great Barrier Reef." As you read, look for the words or phrases Moorehead uses to describe his feelings about the reef.

(See selection entitled "The Great Barrier Reef" by Alan Moorehead printed in The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. August 15, 1953, pages 36-40, beginning "Toward the middle of July" and ending "day after day, night after night in this overpopulated sea.")

EXERCISE I

1. Use your dictonary to find the meanings of technical words like anemone, red emperor, demoisell, bullseye, tendril, batiked, morphine, stonefish, malaria, frigate bird, and crip. Does your dictionary give a very satisfactory explanation of the meanings of these words? Where could you get more information?

2. What does Moorehead mean by a "hollow show of nonchalance" in the second paragraph?

3. Perhaps your teacher can show you a landscape by Rousseau, the painter, with an "evil beast lurking in the background and ready to spring."

4. After reading this selection and thinking it over, fill in the blank space in the following sentence: "Mr. Moorehead felt that the Great Barrier Reef was _____." Compare the word you choose with the words chosen by other members of the class.

5. Pick out the words Moorehead chose to describe his feelings. Can his feelings about the reef be summed up in one word, or does he have mixed feelings? If you believe he had mixed feelings, point out details he used to help us understand his different feelings.

6. In the first paragraph Moorehead uses the pronoun I. Which pronoun did he use in the second paragraph? Why did he change?

7. The first paragraph describes a particular trip Moorehead made to the Reef in the middle of July. But in the second paragraph he does not continue to describe that particular trip; instead, he summarizes the experiences he had in all of his trips to the Reef. Why did he begin by describing a particular trip, and why did he change his tactics after the first paragraph?

8. Does Moorehead present a scene to us? How does he arrange it?

II

Read the following selection from Ernest Hemingway's essay "On the Blue Water: A Gulf Stream Letter." The selection is based on a simple sentence: "Deep sea fishing is thrilling." But the word thrilling or thrill is only the place where Hemingway begins. As you read decide whether the word thrill does a very good job of describing Hemingway's feelings.

(See selection entitled "On the Blue Water: A Gulf Stream Letter" by Ernest Hemingway, printed in Esquire Magazine April 1936, pages 34, 184-85, beginning with "This friend was speaking of elephant" and ending with "nor does it help to think about it.")

EXERCISE II

1. After reading the selection do you feel that the word thrill adequately describes Hemingway's feelings about fishing for marlin and swordfish? What word would you use to describe the feelings he expresses in the last two paragraphs?

2. Can you find one word that adequately describes the feelings Hemingway shows in this selection?

3. What feelings does Carlos reveal when he calls the fish "the bread of my children"? How are Carlos's feelings about the fish different from, say, the feelings of an American businessman who has gone to Cuba to catch a big marlin and have his picture taken with it? What words would you use to describe the feelings of the business man? Can you use the same words you used to describe Carlos's feelings? Compare the words you chose with words chosen by other members of the class.

4. Describe how Carlos feels when the fish is lost.

5. Do you have different feelings about Julio than you do about Carlos? Can you explain why? Look at the details Hemingway uses to describe each of the men, and look at what they say in the dialogue. What feelings about the men do these details arouse in us?

6. Why was it necessary for Hemingway to give us so many details about catching the fish?

7. Hemingway has shown us that he has several different feelings about deep sea fishing; his feelings are even more mixed and complex than are Moorehead's feelings about the Great Barrier Reef. Identify as many of Hemingway's feelings as you can, and point out the details

in the essay that caused you to understand his feelings.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

It is not very often that the feelings we have about our experiences are clear-cut enough or simple enough that we can sum them up in one word. When we tell someone else about them, we feel very strongly that one word like exciting or disgusting or menacing or thrilling won't cover the mixed feelings we have. Then, we must use a combination of words, and, particularly, we must do the best we can to provide the details that will allow someone else to understand the mixed feelings we had.

Write a paper about an experience that gave you mixed feelings. Try to make your feelings clear to the reader by telling him in detail what it was that caused you to feel the way you did.

Again, concentrate, think back, make notes. Is there a scene you want the reader to see? Must he understand the scene in order to understand your feelings? (How much of the scene does Hemingway give us? How important was the scene to understanding Hemingway's feelings?)

You will probably need to organize your paper around a sentence like, "I felt both frightened and disgusted," or "I still laugh about it, but I also feel a little ashamed of what I did."

LESSON FIVE - FOR YOU TO FIND

In the papers we have written up to this point we have searched for a word or a combination of words that will describe our feelings: words like frightening, boring, exciting, interesting, etc. We have used these words to help us decide which details we should include and which we should not include. We have also used these words to let our readers know what to expect--so that they will know ahead of time that the details which follow are supposed to be exciting or boring or whatever they are supposed to be.

Now, let's make the job a little more difficult. Let's not give the readers a word as a clue to the feelings we want them to feel and understand. Let us give them the feeling by means of the details alone.

We must pick our details so that they all contribute to a feeling or a set of feelings, and then we will ask the other members of the class what feelings we have succeeded in creating in their minds. Of course, as we have found out before, our feelings are not usually so simple that they can be summed up in one word. If they could, that one word would do the job, and we wouldn't have to worry about details. So, we shouldn't expect the other members of the class to be able to come up with one word that will describe the feelings we were trying to convey. But they should be able to give us a word or a combination of words that will let us know that they are on the right track. And by discussing their reactions with them we will be able to determine how well we succeeded in conveying the feeling we wanted to convey.

First, however, let us look at how some professional writers have done the job we will try to do. Let us study the details they gave us and see if the class can agree on the feelings these writers were trying to get us to feel and understand.

EXERCISE I

In Immortal Poems of the English Language you will find John Keats's poem "To Autumn." In the last stanza Keats says, in effect, that everyone talks about what a great thing spring is, but that he likes the fall and has special feelings about it. He doesn't tell us what those feelings are; instead, he describes certain details he has noticed and expects us to understand his feelings from the details he gives us.

Read the stanza and answer the questions that follow it.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too, —
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

1. Who is Keats talking to in this stanza—who is "thou"?

2. Can you find one word that will sum up all of Keats's feelings about autumn?

3. Make a list of words that describe Keats's feelings. For each word be ready to point out a detail or a series of details in the poem that gave you this feeling.

4. Compare your list of words with the words chosen by other members of the class. Ask them how particular details in the poem gave them the feelings they felt.

EXERCISE II

Read Theodore Roethke's poem "Child on Top of a Greenhouse."

(See Words for the Wind, © 1946 by Editorial Publishers, Inc.)

1. Do you think this child is older or younger than you are?

2. Are the feelings the child has the kind of feelings you have every day? Are they feelings you might have had at one time?

3. Discuss the details of the poem with the other students in your class and decide what words you would use to describe the feelings Roethke wants us to feel and understand.

EXERCISE III

(See selection entitled "The Glimpse of Pathos" by Albert Hubbell beginning ". . . I was eight or nine years old" and ending "He didn't even know what 'vanilla' was called." Printed in the New Yorker Magazine December 2, 1961, pages 63-64.)

1. What feelings does Hubbell want us to have for the boy? Can you find a single word or a combination of words that will adequately describe these feelings?

2. Point out details in Hubbell's description of the boy and tell what feelings they arouse.

3. What feelings did Hubbell have about the Jukes before the incident in the ice-cream-and-candy-store?

4. Discuss with the class the feelings the boy had after the incident. Can you find a single word or a cominbation of words that will adequately describe his feelings?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Write a description of a scene or an incident you have observed. Your job is to select those details that will give the reader a particular feeling about the experience. You, of course, must know what word or words could be used to describe the feeling: exciting, menacing, intriguing, etc. But do not use those words. Instead, give the reader the feeling without telling him what the feeling is.

After you have written the description, allow the other students in your class to read it; then the teacher will ask them what feelings the description was supposed to convey. Discuss with the class how well you succeeded in giving them the feelings you wanted to give them. Can they suggest ways in which you could have done a better job of creating the feeling?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Shangri-La is a term that means the never-never land of perfection. Each of us has--or ought to have--his own Shangri-La tucked somewhere in the back of his mind. What sort of place is your Shangri-La? Is it the Big Rock Candy Mountain, where all of the rivers are lemonade and bubble gum grows on trees, or is it Erewhon, where you are perfectly free, where no one tells you to do this or not to do that? Perhaps your Shangri-La is in the future, when you will be a multi-millionaire with ten automobiles, a swimming pool as big as a lake, and a jet airplane to take you off to France and Siam. Perhaps it is a simple cabin in the woods.

Wherever it is, whenever it is, and whatever it is, tell your classmates about your Shangri-La. What does it look like? What are the things you do there?

Only describe giving specific details; do not use words like <u>beautiful</u>, <u>restful</u>, or <u>exciting</u>. If you write well enough and specifically enough, your readers should say, "Yes, that really is Shangri-La.

LESSON SIX - THE LAUGH WAS ON ME

A feeling we all have, more often than we like to admit, is embarrassment, and it is not a feeling that we usually like to tell other people about. We are usually embarrassed about times when we made fools of ourselves, and we would be perfectly satisfied if our embarrassing moments disappeared from the face of the earth and no one would ever know about them.

But our embarrassing moments are really amusing, at least to other people, and they can be to us too--after they are over and done with and we can look back at them. Also, when we stop to think about it, other people are not so much different than we are, and they have probably been embarrassed for the same reasons we have. So they can sympathize with our embarrassment and be amused by it too.

In this lesson we are going to write about an embarrassing moment. But we will not be concerned only with describing it in detail in order that someone else can feel the embarrassment we felt, we will also want to tell of the incident in such a way that the reader will be amused by it. In order to do this we have to pick an embarrassing moment that is far enough in the past that we can laugh at it ourselves. If it doesn't amuse us, we can't tell it in such a way as to make it amusing to other people.

In order to get some clues to how we can do the job, we will look at Stephen Leacock's description of his battle with a bank.

(See selection entitled "My Financial Career" beginning "When I go into a bank I get rattled." and ending "I keep my money in cash in my trousers pocket and my savings in silver dollars in a sock." from Laugh With Leacock by Stephen Leacock. Copyright 1930 by Dodd, Mead & Company.)

EXERCISES

1. Point out some of the details which show us how Leacock feels about depositing his money.

2. Point out some of the details that show us how he feels about the bank and the people in the bank.

3. Why did Leacock use the word rattled in the first paragraph rather than the word embarrassed?

4. How many details of what the bank actually looked like does Leacock give? What was more important in making him embarrassed, the bank building or the people in the bank?

5. Discuss with the class how Leacock chose details that would show us how the people in the bank rattled him.

6. Do you sympathize with Leacock's embarrassment? Why? Are you amused by it? Why?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Pick an embarrassing moment in your past; be sure that it is far enough in the past that you now think the incident was funny. Describe the incident so that the reader will be able to understand and sympathize with your embarrassment and also be amused by it.

LESSON SEVEN - I'M SURE YOU'LL AGREE

Up to this point our purpose in writing has merely been to have other people understand the feelings we have had about our experiences. And we have discovered that the best way to make the reader understand our feelings is to create similar feelings in his mind. So, we have been creating feelings in the mind of the reader by re-creating in words the details of the experience that caused us to have the feelings in the first place.

Sometimes, however, strong feelings of liking or disliking are mixed up with the feelings we have about an experience: we may feel proud or well satisfied, or we may feel distaste or disgust. Consequently, when we tell somebody else about the experience, we not only want them to understand how we felt, we also want them to join us in liking or disliking whatever it is we are telling them about.

We want to say, for example, "Last Saturday's class picnic <u>was</u> a lot of fun," but we also want to say "I liked it, and I think we should have more of them."

In your next paper your job is not only to make the reader feel that the picnic (if that is what you are writing about) was fun, but you also want him to say, after you have told him about it "I too think we should have more picnics."

First, we will look at how a professional writer has done this job.

(See selection from <u>With Love and Loathing</u> by John Crosby beginning "I was in the shower one day singing . . ." and ending "It's our house, and our TV set." Published by McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963. Pages 122-24.)

EXERCISE

1. Assume you like Fabian (or some other singer now popular with teenagers); would you choose different details from those Crosby chose to describe him? Give examples.

2. If you liked Fabian would you compare him to Medusa or a top? What might you compare him to?

3. If you liked Fabian, would you use the word racket to describe his accompaniment? What words might you choose?

4. Even though you are young, do you begin to agree with Crosby that young people shouldn't be able to decide what kind of music adults have to listen to? Do you think adults have to listen to singers who sing for teenagers? Why did Crosby exaggerate?

5. Is there any truth in Crosby's charge that today the revolt of young people is against music itself and language itself?

6. Does Crosby think it is wrong to revolt against music and language? How can you tell one way or the other how he feels? Are music and language important?

7. Do you think Crosby's exaggerations and his snide tone turn us against him so that we reject what he says?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

1. Think of an experience or a group of experiences you have had that left you with a strong feeling of liking or disliking. The feeling must be strong enough that you want other people to share your liking or disliking. Think through the details of the incident or incidents in order to discover those details which gave you the feeling of liking or disliking. Make notes of those details.

2. Think over these details and decide how you would tell them to the other members of your class in such a way that they too will like or dislike whatever it is you are talking about. If you think of more details, note them down.

3. Think again about how you feel. If you are writing about something you dislike, are you angry, do you want to make fun of it, or are you dead serious? How can you make your readers understand these feelings?

If you are writing about something you like, do you like it because it amuses you, because it is exciting and interesting, or because you think it is very important and very serious? How can you make the reader understand these feelings?

4. Write your paper.

LESSON EIGHT - OPINIONS

In the last lesson we studied ways of conveying our attitudes toward an experience so that other people will share our feeling about it. Our purpose in describing an experience is often--like yours in the last paper--to convince other people that they will like what we like; they will, we hope, agree with the opinion we express. But opinion sometimes means more than just what we like or dislike. If you say, for example, "I love chocolate candy but I can't eat it; I know it isn't good for me," you are expressing a different kind of opinion. Can you see why it is different? What is this kind of opinion based on?

When we are trying to think what we ought to do, we often must consider more than just what we like; we consider what is wisest or best. If other people disagree with us about what is wisest to do--and they often may disagree--we do what you did in your last lesson: explain our reasons for believing as we do; listen to other people's reasons for believing as they do; and perhaps make up our minds which course is best.

You might be interested to see how people have tried to express this kind of opinion, perhaps to follow some differing opinions on the same question. In our American history one of the groups of people who had very difficult decisions to make were the Indians. They often disagreed about the best policy to pursue and the proper attitude to take toward the white men. Here is a speech made about 1862 by Chief Red Cloud to a council of the Sioux tribes who were gathered to consider whether they should go on the warpath. These are Red Cloud's words, as translated by Charles Eastman, who was also a Sioux:

(See selection beginning "Friends, . . . it has been our misfortune" and ending with "to be herded like the cattle of the white man " from Indian Heroes and Great Chieftans by Charles Eastman. Published by Little, Brown, and Co., 1918. Boston. Pages 14-15.)

EXERCISES

1. What did Red Cloud think the Indians should do?

2. What were his reasons? How did he think white men had deceived the Indians? What is the "spirit water"? Why is it deceitful?

3. How does he feel about the things that are important to the white men? What attitude does he suggest toward the white men and the way they treat each other? When he tells the Indians what they must do to be like white men, is he describing actions he approves of? How can you tell?

4. Which way of life does he consider better? What words tell you? How would he answer the question he asks at the end? Is this a real question?

Red Cloud expressed an opinion he believed was right, but it was not the only opinion held by Indians. Some of the leaders of the tribes thought he was wrong, and believed his policy would bring disaster. Here is a speech made about the same time by Spotted Tail, a very brave old man of the Brule tribe:

(See selection beginning "Hay, hay, hay! Alas, alas!" and ending . . . give counsel as old men!" from Indian Heroes and Great Chieftans by Charles Eastman. Published by Little, Brown, and Co., 1918. Boston. Pages 35-36.)

EXERCISES

1. How does Spotted Tail disagree with Red Cloud on what is best to do? What does he recommend? What reasons does he give?

2. Are his reasons more or less convincing than Red Cloud's?

3. How is his description of the white man different from Red Cloud's?

One of the most famous Sioux heroes of all is Sitting Bull, who also expressed opinions about what the tribes should do. Here is his speech delivered at one of the same councils where Red Cloud and Spotted Tail spoke:

(See selettion beginning "Behold, my friends, the spring is come;" and ending with "First kill me, before you can take possession of my fatherland!" from Indian Heroes and Great Chieftans by Charles Eastman. Published by Little, Brown, and Co., 1918. Boston. Pages 119-120.)

EXERCISES

1. Does Sitting Bull agree with Red Cloud or with Spotted Tail? Does he give the same or different reasons?

2. What attitude does he express toward the white man's way of life? Which words tell you?

3. What does he think the Indians should do? What reasons does he give?

4. You have read three speeches, each one expressing an opinion. Which opinion do you think is most reasonable?

5. Which of the speeches seems to you to explain most effectively the opinion it sets forth? Why?

Whenever opinions differ about the best policy to follow, we have a problem of deciding which opinion is wisest and best. Can we assume that all opinions are equally good? If not, can we find any useful ways to tell a wise opinion from a foolish one? Reading the following selection may offer some suggestions. It is an account of an Indian council by a white man who was present and noticed how the listeners decided which opinion to accept:

(See selection beginning "The typical Indian is always shown with a warbonnet . . ." and ending with "to back up his threats and fiery denunciations." from The Book of Woodcraft and Indian Lore by Ernest Thompson Seton. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1926. Pages 483-488.)

EXERCISES

1. Why does the author tell you so much about headdresses in the first part of the selection?

2. In the description of the council, why did the first speaker seem effective to the author?

3. What is surprising about the effect of the second speaker?

4. What does this suggest to you about the way to evaluate different opinions? What makes a man's opinion worth having?

ASSIGNMENT FOR SPEAKING

As we have been discussing differing opinions and the problem of recognizing a wise opinion, it may have occurred to you that among the people you know are some whose opinions you pay little attention to, others whose opinions you value and listen to. Think carefully about the people whose ideas you are usually willing to accept, and then see if you can think of one person whose opinions generally carry weight with you. Now try to decide why you consider the opinions of this person valuable, and prepare to explain your reasons in a brief speech.

When you have had a chance to prepare what you want to say, your teacher will divide the class into small groups of four or five people, and in the group each of you may speak about the person whose opinions you respect. When everyone has spoken, your group should select the speech you think would be most interesting for the entire class to hear; the speeches selected may be repeated for the class. In choosing the speech from your group, you may want to consider which speech presented most clearly the reasons for accepting the opinions, and which speech made the most useful points about how to recognize a wise opinion.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE

Rhetoric Curriculum II

Student Version

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RHETORIC OF THE SENTENCE

If you have already read The Call of the Wild by Jack London you will recall that it is the story of Buck, a strong, handsome dog, stolen from his master in the States and sold to serve as a sled dog in Alaska during the mad days of the Yukon Gold Rush. Here he learns to toil in the traces, eventually earning his place as the leader of a team of hard-working dogs. The story is not only Buck's story, however. Sometimes it is the story of all his teammates on the trail. The following paragraphs relate a complete episode from the book. Read these paragraphs first for the story. Then turn your attention to the questions that follow.

> (For paragraphs see The Call of the Wild and Selected Stories by Jack London (Signet Classic), published by New American Library, pp. 47-49, beginning "It was a hard trip,...." and ending "...behind the belt of river trees.")

EXERCISE 1

1. Look carefully at the second paragraph of this excerpt.

2. Change the verb in the first sentence of this paragraph from passive to active. What word will you have to insert as the subject?

3. If you were to name the subject of this paragraph in one word, what word would you choose? Does this word give you a clue to why London chose to make this first sentence passive?

4. From what point of view does London want us to see the events in this paragraph, from the point of view of the drivers of from the point of view of the dogs?

It is not very likely that Jack London deliberately decided to make the first sentence of this paragraph passive, nor is it likely that he deliberately decided that the events in this paragraph should be narrated from the point of view of the dogs. Once he had decided that he wished to portray the difficulties and the horrors of life in the North from the point of view of the living creatures who struggle for life in the cold, he no longer had to think consciously about point of view or active and passive sentences. Once he really understood and really felt what it is like to be alive in the cold and the snow and to have to accomplish difficult tasks like delivering the mail; once he felt these things deeply and honestly, the choice between making a particular sentence active or passive became automatic. Of course, even a writer like Jack London slips occasionally and it was necessary for him to go back over his work and revise it in order to be sure he was telling the truth and to be sure that he was giving the reader the impression he intended to give him. When he did revise,

he had to know that making a sentence active or passive affects the point of view from which the reader sees what is happening, and therefore he had to check each sentence to make sure that he had chosen active or passive verbs that would be consistent with the point of view.

EXERCISE II

1. Look now at the third paragraph. Point out the subjects of the first five sentences of this paragraph. What are the subjects of the next three sentences? Is London writing this incident from the point of view of the dogs as opposed to the drivers, or is he writing from the point of view of the dogs and the drivers as opposed to the North?

2. The next to the last sentence in the third paragraph is passive. If you turn it around, you will discover that this sentence can easily be made active, but, either automatically or deliberately, London chose to make it passive. Can you think of any reason why he wanted this sentence to be passive? Is Dave strong and healthy, a dog who <u>does</u> things, or is Dave sick and weak, a dog to whom things are being done? Is there a connection between the fact that Dave is dying and London's choice of a passive verb?

The look we have taken at London's active and passive verbs in these two paragraphs reminds us that when we write we have to notice whether our active and passive verbs will have the effect we want them to have. We have noticed that if we make a verb passive, we change the subject of the sentence. We must remember that our choice of active and passive sentences and our choice of a subject has an effect on the point of view from which the reader sees the events, and we must learn how to choose the kind of verb that will maintain the point of view from which we want the reader to see what is happening.

EXERCISE III

You may recall a student paper about a shoestring which you read in the seventh grade. Part of it is reprinted below.

> When I first received this (shoestring) it was a magnificent striking white, like the clouds on a warm spring day. It is still striking, but it is now wrinkled and is a dark, dark black in the corners. It has withstood violent rain-storms, battering hailstorms, and massive snowstorms. It has been mauled.

1. The last sentence is passive. If you were revising the paper, would you leave this sentence as it is or would you make it active? Would you make other changes in the paragraph?

2. Make some notes in defense of your answers, and be prepared to discuss the question with the rest of the class.

EXERCISE IV (Optional)

Look back at a paper you have written which describes some thing or some event.

1. From what point of view is the thing or the event seen?

2. Are you satisfied that you chose the point of view from which you wanted the reader to see what you described?

3. Are the active and passive verbs you chose consistent with the point of view?

II.

Read the following excerpt from Gertrude Stein's Lectures in America in which Miss Stein discusses the question and the question mark. Read it carefully and be prepared to read it aloud to the rest of the class.

(For excerpt, see Lectures in America by Gertrude Stein, published by Random House, Inc., copyright 1935 and renewed 1962, pp. 214-215, beginning "There are some punctuations that...." and ending "...I always found it positively revolting....")

EXERCISE I

1. Your teacher will ask some of the members of the class to read Gertrude Stein's paragraph aloud. Can you decide among yourselves how each sentence should be read aloud? Are you able to tell which sentences are questions even though there are no question marks?

2. In spite of Miss Stein's arguments against punctuation would her paragraph have been easier to read if she had used commas, colons, semicolons, and question marks? At what point would you as a reader like to have punctuation marks inserted?

3. What is the first question Miss Stein asks in this paragraph? What is the answer to this question? Has Miss Stein told us her answer to the question before she asks the question? Does she want us to find our own answers to the question or does she want us to agree with her answer?

4. Discuss with the rest of the class whether you think Miss Stein makes her point more sharply and effectively by asking a question to which the answer is obvious rather than by simply making a statement.

A writer can use a question for comic effect, particularly when the answer to the question is obvious or absurd. In the following passage Mark Twain is being somewhat unfair to James Fenimore Cooper because we all do foolish things at times, and Fenimore Cooper was no different from the rest of us on that score. Twain is making fun of a foolish thing Cooper did, but, for the sake of exaggeration and humor, he ignores all of the things Cooper ever did that weren't foolish.

Mark Twain felt very strongly that all good writing has to be based on careful and accurate observation, and he used a passage from The Deerslayer to point out what happens when we do not observe accurately. Notice the questions Twain asks in the second and third paragraphs and answer the questions about them that follow the excerpt.

If Cooper had been an observer, his inventive faculty would have worked better; not more interestingly, but more rationally, more plausibly. Cooper's proudest creations in the way of "situations" suffer noticeably from the absence of the observer's protecting gift. Cooper's eye was splendidly inaccurate. Cooper seldom saw anything correctly. He saw nearly all things as through a glass eye, darkly. Of course a man who cannot see the commonest little everyday matters accurately is working at a disadvantage when he is constructing a "situation." In the Deerslayer tale Cooper has a stream which is fifty feet wide where it flows out of a lake; it presently narrows to twenty as it meanders along for no given reason, and yet when a stream acts like that it ought to be required to explain itself. Fourteen pages later the width of the

brook's outlet from the lake has suddenly shrunk thirty feet and become "the narrowest parts of the stream." This shrinkage is not accounted for. The stream has bends in it, a sure indication that it has alluvial banks and cuts them; yet these bends are only thirty and fifty feet long. If Cooper had been a nice and punctilious observer he would have noticed that the bends were oftener nine hundred feet long than short of it.

Cooper made the exit of that stream fifty feet wide, in the first place, for no particular reason; in the second place, he narrowed it to less than twenty to accommodate some Indians. He bends a "sapling" to the form of an arch over this narrow passage and conceals six Indians in its foliage. They are "laying" for a settler's scow or ark which is coming up the stream on its way to the lake; it is being hauled against the stiff current by a rope whose stationary end is anchored in the lake; its rate of progress cannot be more than a mile an hour. Cooper describes the ark, but pretty obscurely. In the matter of dimensions "it was littel more than a modern canal-boat." Let us guess, then, that it was about one hundred and forty feet long. It was of "greater breadth than common." Let us guess, then, that it was about sixteen feet wide. This leviathan had been prowling down bends which were but a third as long as itself, and scraping between banks where it had only two feet of space to spare on each side. We cannot too much admire this miracle. A low-roofed log dwelling occupies "two-thirds of the ark's length"--a dwelling ninety feet long and sixteen feet wide, let us say--a kind of vestibule train. The dwelling has two rooms--each forty-five feet long and sixteen feet wide, let us guess. One of them is the bedroom of the Hutter girls, Judith and Hetty; the other is the parlor in the daytime, at night it is papa's bedchamber. The ark is arriving at the stream's exit now, whose width has been reduced to less than twenty feet to accommodate the Indians--say to eighteen. There is a foot to spare on each side of the boat. Did the Indians notice that there was going to be a tight squeeze there? Did they notice that they could make money by climbing down out of that arched sapling and just stepping aboard when the ark scraped by? No; other Indians would have noticed these things, but Cooper's Indians never notice anything. Cooper thinks they are marvelous creatures for noticing, but he was almost always in error about his Indians. There was seldom a sane one among them.

The ark is one hundred and forty feet long; the dwelling is ninety feet long. The idea of the Indians is to drop softly and secretly from the arched sapling to the dwelling as the ark creeps along under it at the rate of a mile an hour, and butcher the family. It will take the ark a minute and a half to pass under. It will take the ninety foot dwelling a minute to pass under. Now, then, what did the six Indians do? It would take you thirty years to guess, and even then you would have to give it up, I believe. Therefore I will tell you what the Indians did. Their chief, a person of quite extraordinary intellect for a Cooper Indian, warily watched the canalboat as it squeezed along under him, and when he had got his calculations fined down exactly the right shade, as he judged, he let go and dropped. And <u>missed the house</u>! He missed

the house and landed in the stern of the scow. It was not much of a fall, yet it knocked him silly. He lay there unconscious. If the house had been ninety-seven feet long he would have made the trip. The fault was Cooper's not his. The error lay in the construction of the house. Cooper was no architect.

There still remained in the roost five Indians. The boat has passed under and is now out of their reach. Let me explain what the five did--you would not be able to reason it out for yourself. No. 1 jumped for the boat, but fell in the water astern of it. Then No. 2 jumped for the boat, but fell in the water still farther astern of it. Then No. 3 jumped for the boat, and fell a good way astern of it. Then No. 4 jumped for the boat, and fell in the water away astern. Then even No. 5 made a jump for the boat--for he was a Cooper Indian. In the matter of intellect, the difference between a Cooper Indian and the Indian that stands in front of the cigar shop is not spacious. The scow episode is really a sublime burst of invention; but it does not thrill, because the inaccuracy of the details throws a sort of air of fictitiousness and general improbability over it. This comes of Cooper's inadequacy as an observer.

EXERCISE II

1. When Twain asks "Did the Indians notice that there was going to be a tight squeeze there?" and "Did they notice that they could make money by climbing down out of that arched sapling and just stepping aboard when the ark scraped by?" do we know the answer before he tells us? Has Twain specifically told us the answer to these questions before he asks them? How can we guess what the answer was before Twain gives us the answer? Discuss with the class the clues to the answer that Twain has given us before he asks the questions.

2. When Twain asks the question "Now, then, what did the six Indians do?" do we know the answer before he tells us? Is Twain right when he says "It would take you thirty years to guess, and even then you would have to give it up, I believe"? Why did Twain ask the question at this point?

We have examined two kinds of questions that professional writers have used. The answer to the first kind of question has already been told to us by the writer, or else the answer to the question has been made obvious. The writer's purpose in asking this kind of question is the right one, and by telling us the answer ahead of time, he makes sure that we will agree with him. In fact, as readers we feel that we have to agree with him because the answer to the question seems so obvious.

The second kind of question has not been answered beforehand. It is asked to arouse our interest in what the answer will be; it is asked to create suspense.

The second kind of question is used in Kipling's "Danny Deever." The first stanza of that ballad begins with a question:

"What are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade.
"To turn you out, to turn you out," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What makes you look so white, so white?" said Files-on-Parade.
"I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch," the Color-Sergeant said.
"For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can 'ear the Dead March play.
The regiment's in 'ollow square--they're hangin' him today:
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'."

And it is not until the Color-Sergeant answers the questions of Files-on-Parade that we learn what is happening to Danny Deever.

EXERCISE III (Optional)

1. Write a short paper in which you begin with a question and then answer the question.

2. Write a short paper that ends with a question to which you have already supplied the answer.

III

When we form a sentence conjunction it is possible to connect the two sentences that have been joined with a conjunction. You have learned that some of these conjunctions are and, but, or, nor, for, yet, and so. When we decide to use a sentence conjunction we kust also decide which of these conjunctions we will use. They all differ in meaning and are used to connect different kinds of ideas. In this lesson we will be concerned only with the difference between and and but, and we will attempt to decide how we choose between these two words when we want to connect two sentences.

EXERCISE I

Three paragraphs from The Call of the Wild are reproduced below, but in place of the and or but that Jack London used to connect two sentences, there is a blank space.

1. Carefully read the sentences on both sides of each numbered blank space. Then on a separate sheet of paper copy down the

numbers and write the word and or the word but according to which one seems to fit best, in each of the blank spaces. (Do not write on the unit itself.) Be prepared to defend your choice.

2. Compare the word you chose with the words other students chose and discuss with them the reasons for your choice.

3. Look back at the excerpt from The Call of the Wild that was printed earlier in this unit and compare the words you chose to the words London chose. Discuss any differences you find with the rest of the class.

It was a hard trip, with the mail behind them, (1) the heavy work wore them down. They were short of weight and in poor condition when they made Dawson, and should have had a ten days' or a week's rest at least. (2) in two days' time they dropped down the Yukon bank from the Barracks, loaded with letters from the outside. The dogs were tired, the drivers grumbling, (3) to make matters worse, it snowed every day. This meant a soft trail, greater friction on the runners, and heavier pulling for the dogs; yet the drivers were fair through it all, and did their best for the animals.

Each night, the dogs were attended to first. They ate before the drivers ate, (4) no man sought his sleeping robe till he had seen to the feet of the dogs he drove. Still, their strength went down. Since the beginning of the winter they had travelled eighteen hundred miles, dragging sleds the whole weary distance; (5) eighteen hundred miles will tell upon the toughest. Buck stood it, keeping his mates up to their work and maintaining discipline, though he, too was very tired. Billee cried and whimpered regularly in his sleep each night. Joe was sourer than ever, (6) Sol-leks was unapproachable, blind side or other side.

(7) it was Dave who suffered most of all. Something had gone wrong with him. He became more morose and irritable, (8) when camp was pitched at once made his nest, where his driver fed him. Once out of the harness and down, he did not get on his feet again till harness-up time in the morning. Sometimes, in the traces, when jerked by a sudden stoppage of the sled, or by straining to stop it, he would cry out with pain. The driver examined him, (9) could find nothing. All the drivers became interested in his case. They talked it over at mealtime, and over their last pipes before going to bed, (10) one night they held a consultation. He was brought from his nest by the fire and was pressed and prodded till he cried out many times. Something was wrong inside, (11) they could locate no broken bones, could not make it out.

EXERCISE II

Examine a paper you have written. Mark all the places where you have used and or but to make a sentence conjunction. Also mark the places where you might have joined a sentence conjunction with and or but but did not. Make notes defending the choices you have made or notes explaining any changes you would like to make now.